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RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 000966

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PBTS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SENV](#) [IS](#) [KISL](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#)

SUBJECT: SALFIT LEADERSHIP RAISES PROBLEMS OF ROADBLOCKS,
WASTEWATER SEEPAGE FROM NEARBY SETTLEMENTS

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (SBU) Summary. In a meeting with the Consul General on June 8, the Mayor of Salfit Municipality and Governor of Salfit District both expressed concern about a road gate that has closed the main road into Salfit. They also described untreated wastewater seeping into Salfit from the nearby settlement of Ariel. The Mayor urged the USG to raise these problems with the GOI. The Mayor and Governor welcomed the establishment of a new American Corner in Salfit and praised the recent speech of President Obama in Cairo. End Summary.

Gate Cuts Off Main Road into Salfit

12. (SBU) The Consul General met with the Mayor of Salfit Municipality, Tahseen Abd Halem Salimah, and Governor of Salfit District, Muneer 'Aboushi, at a June 8 signing ceremony to establish an American Corner in the Salfit Municipal Library. Salimah explained that, since 2001, a road gate at the western entrance to Salfit has closed the main road leading into the city, cutting the town off from many of the nineteen villages in the governorate. Salimah said that the IDF closed the road due to its proximity to Ariel settlement. Governor 'Aboushi noted that alternative routes to Salfit take so long that it is faster for residents of villages in the governorate to go to the hospital in Nablus. (Note: A representative from Salfit's Municipal Council told PolOff that a drive from the town of Salfit to a school in a neighboring village that would take ten minutes on the main road takes an hour using the alternative route. End Note.)

13. (SBU) The Consul General assured the Mayor and Governor that the USG has an ongoing dialogue with the GOI on access and movement in the West Bank, and noted some progress in recent weeks with the removal of several roadblocks in other parts of the West Bank.

Wastewater from Nearby Settlements
Causes Health, Environmental Problems

14. (SBU) Salimah told the Consul General that Salfit faces a serious problem from seepage of untreated wastewater from the nearby settlement of Ariel and the adjacent Barkan Industrial Zone. The seepage of wastewater has caused disease and other health problems among Salfit residents and harmed the environment, he said. Mayor Salimah requested that the USG raise this concern with the GOI.

Comment

15. (C) The Ariel Settlement Bloc cuts deep into the Salfit

governorate and impacts directly on the lives of Palestinians in the area, particularly in terms of movement restrictions and environmental damage. Post urges that the specific issues raised by the Governor and the Mayor be included in our dialogue with the GOI.

WALLES